

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00832 051150Z

62

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 051038Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2423

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

USMISSION GENEVA

SECDEF WASHDC

CINCPAC

CDR JCRC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0832

EXDIS

STATE D/PW FOR HENDERSON

GENEVA FOR SIEVERTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CASC, LA

SUBJECT: AMCIT CHARLES M. DEAN

REF: VIENTIANE 0809

1. THE SUBSTANCE OF MY TALKS WITH FONMIN PHOUMI VONGVICHIT AND THE PRINCES REGARDING THE DEAN CASE WAS GIVEN TO AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER BORTHWICK TODAY. IN THE COURSE OF THIS CONVERSATION, I NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WERE NOW SOME GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM WITH REGARD TO THIS AFFAIR, IT WAS IMPORTANT NOT TO REDUCE OUR PRESSURE ON THE PATHET LAO. I ASKED WHETHER THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD CONSIDERED WRITING A LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER OR PRIME MINISTER REGARDING SHARMAN'S DISAPPEARANCE AND EXPRESSED REGRET THAT THE FORTHCOMING VISIT OF ECON MINISTER SOTH PHETRASY HAD NOT BEEN CANCELLED.

2. BORTHWICK STATED THAT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN CANBERRA HAD DECIDED THAT THE SOTH VISIT AND SHARMAN SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE ASSOCIATED. HE TOOK THE LINE THAT VIGOROUS
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PAGE 02 VIENTI 00832 051150Z

PRESENTATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE SHARMAN CASE WOULD BE MADE TO

SOTH IN CANBERRA AND THESE MIGHT BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN ANY PRESENTATIONS HE MIGHT MAKE IN VIENTIANE. I AGREED THAT THESE REPRESENTATIONS MIGHT DO SOME GOOD BUT IT SEEMED TO ME TO BE UNFORTUNATE THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS HAD NOT TAKEN THE SAME POSITION WITH REGARD TO LAO AID-SEEKING MISSIONS. THERE HAD BEEN A MOMENT WHEN THE SOTH TRIP APPEARED TO BE POSTPONED BUT IN SOME WAY WHICH I DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE VISIT SEEMED TO BE BACK ON THE REELS. BORTHWICK DID NOT GIVE A VERY CLEAR EXPLANATION OF THIS PHENOMENON.

3. I DID NOT PASS ON TO BORTHWICK THE INFORMATION IN STATE 025100, BUT BORTHWICK HAS NOT BEEN TOLD BY THE PATHET LAO "THAT SHARMAN WILL BE RELEASED WITHOUT ADVANCE NOTICE." IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO JUDGE FROM HERE WHETHER FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WITH REGARD TO THE SOTH PHETHRASY MISSION WOULD BE ADVISABLE, BUT THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO URGE THAT THE AUSTRALIANS SEEK SOME PRETEXT TO POSTPONE THIS TRIP, THE DATES FOR WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED.

WHITEHOUSE

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER S/S-O, MR KUCHEL.

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NNN

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